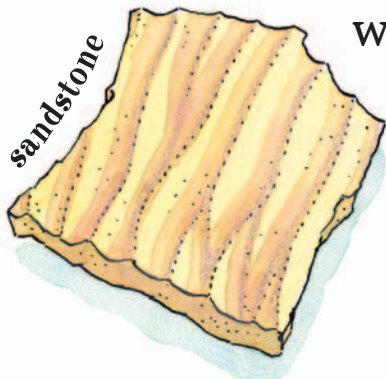


# Rock Secrets

Could where you're sitting this very second once have been a pool of lava? Or the bottom of an ocean? Or a tropical forest?

Maybe. How can you tell?

You pick up a rock. Every rock has a secret story to tell about what the earth was like long ago.



Millions of years of wind and rain wore down mountains until nothing was left but grains of sand. In time

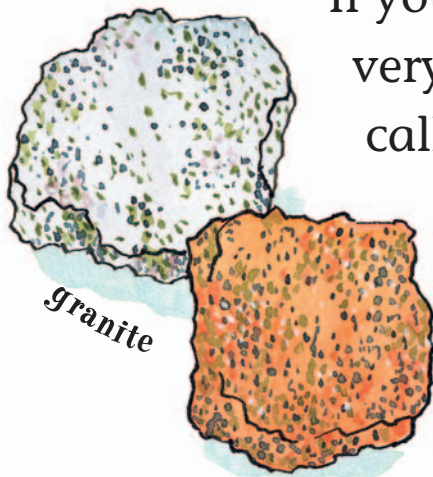
the sand stuck together and became rock called **sandstone**. Sandstone sometimes shows ripples left by long-ago winds or waves.



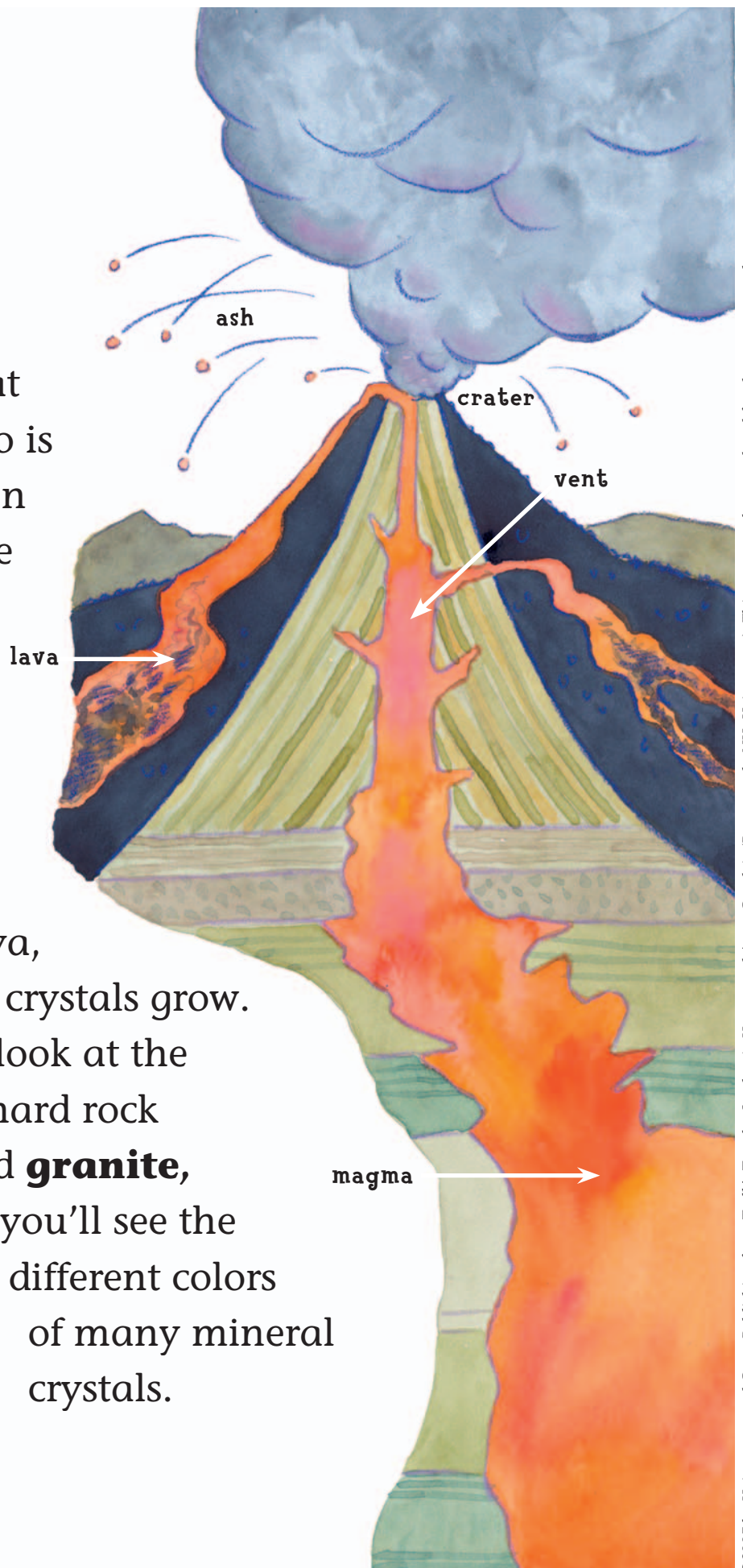


Shiny black rock that comes out of a volcano is called **obsidian**. When a volcano erupts, some lava cools so fast it hardens into this smooth, glassy rock.

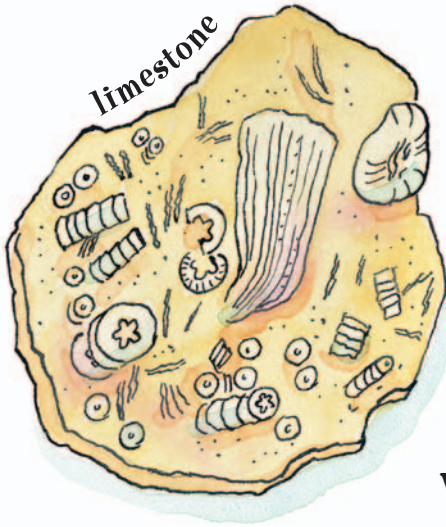
Rocks with sparkly crystals spent time far underground. Heat from deeply buried lava, called **magma**, helps crystals grow.



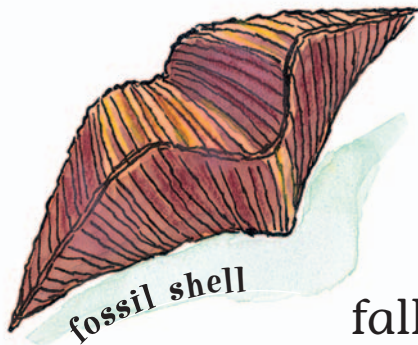
If you look at the very hard rock called **granite**, you'll see the different colors of many mineral crystals.



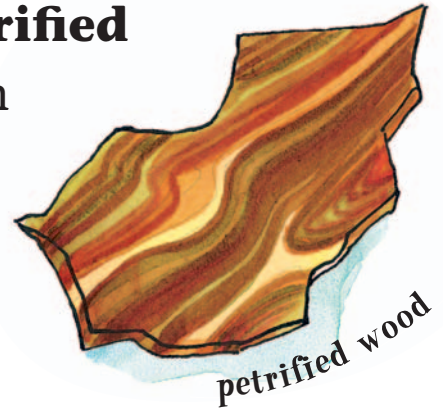




When ocean animals died long ago, their shells and skeletons sank to the seafloor and formed **limestone**. If you find limestone in your yard you'll know that your neighborhood was once covered by a great sea!

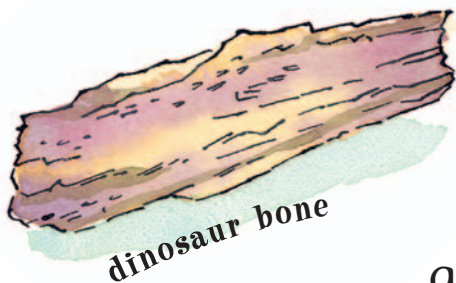


A rock called **petrified wood** is made from a tree that died in an ancient forest.



Mud covered the fallen tree. Minerals that

were dissolved in the mud slowly seeped into the rotting wood and made an exact copy of it in hard rock.



If you're *really* lucky, you might pick up a rock with a piece of dinosaur bone called a **fossil**. Every single

rock, even a tiny pebble from your playground, has a secret story.

Adapted from an article and art by Betsy James

